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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KIEV 002932

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [UP](#)  
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: YUSHCHENKO-LED ROUNDTABLE POINTS TOWARD  
BROAD COALITION OF "NATIONAL UNITY"?

REF: KIEV 2900

Classified By: Political Counselor Kent Logsdon, reason 1.4 (b,d)

11. (SBU) Summary. President Yushchenko moderated an extraordinary six-hour marathon roundtable July 27 involving all Ukrainian political leaders and additional eminent figures to discuss a way out of the current political impasse. Yushchenko ended the session at 10 pm with a plea for the parties to reconcile their remaining differences and agree on a shared vision as part of a Pact of National Unity that could be signed July 28, in what many observers presume might serve as a basis for a new "national unity" coalition likely involving Party of Regions, Yushchenko's Our Ukraine (OU), and the Socialists. Yuliya Tymoshenko announced she would not sign the unity document and that her bloc (BYuT) would go into active opposition. The Communists, whom OU does not want in the coalition, sparred with Yushchenko and OU leader Bezsmertny during the roundtable about Ukraine's NATO membership aspirations. As of 1230 Kyiv time July 28, a working group made up of representatives of all the parties continued to work out the final details.

12. (C) Comment: After weeks of a seemingly aloof, passive stance as Ukraine faced a serious political impasse, Yushchenko is now actively engaged in the process, first in a relatively hard-hitting prime-time TV appearance July 26 and then by moderating a six-hour marathon round-table which gave the impression that Yushchenko was in charge of the process. The roundtable was very successful in showing the public that the political leadership is serious about reaching agreement. It was also held in the wake of an apparent internal Yushchenko/OU decision to accept Regions' leader Yanukovych as a PM if Regions agrees to OU's red-line demands for the continuation of Yushchenko's foreign and domestic policies and the immediate formation of a Constitutional Court. According to Moroz, if the President confirms Yanukovych as Prime Minister, then the Rada will vote Yanukovych into office after 30 minutes, and then approve a full government slate of ministers within three hours. And if the result of the roundtable is a "national unity coalition" between Regions, OU, and the Socialists with Regions' leader Yanukovych as Premier, the primary question looking forward will be to what extent Yushchenko remains locked in and projecting Presidential authority with an expected Regions-dominated government operating out of the Cabinet of Ministers and the Rada (parliament). End Summary and Comment.

Yushchenko starts to act Presidential (finally)  
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13. (SBU) Yushchenko actively and publicly reengaged in Ukraine's messy political impasse July 26 with a strong prime-time TV appearance on multiple channels in which he called for national unity and chastised the unnamed forces in the Rada who had used dangerously inappropriate language to inflame the situation (note: a particular rebuke to Speaker

Moroz for the latter's July 24 comments, reftel). He followed the public message with the convening of a six-hour roundtable at the Presidential Secretariat, televised live, involving Speaker Moroz, Acting PM Yekhanurov, the five party faction leaders in the Rada (Regions' Yanukovych, Tymoshenko, OU's Bezsmertny, Socialists' Tsushko, Communists' Symonenko), plus a handful of other "eminent persons." During a July 28 meeting with visiting DAS David Kramer and the Ambassador, Moroz stressed that the roundtable had been Yushchenko's idea from the start and was an attempt to chart Ukraine's future domestic and foreign policy direction for the future.

14. (SBU) Yushchenko opened the roundtable by stressing his standard themes: the importance of national unity; the Ukrainian language; economic development; and the European direction of foreign policy. Of more importance perhaps was his projection of Presidential authority over the succeeding six hours, of being in charge of coordinating the nation's political forces in a very public and transparent way in an attempt to resolve the current political impasse.

Political leaders reiterate positions, debate NATO  
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15. (SBU) Speaker Moroz and the faction leaders played off of Yushchenko's themes in various ways while also pushing their narrower partisan agendas throughout the roundtable. While in favor of the proposed Pact of National Unity and a broad coalition, Moroz asked to eliminate language on land sales and gut the description on foreign policy. OU's Bezsmertny stressed the need to swear in all Constitutional Court judges, the importance of Ukraine's aspirations to join the WTO, NATO, and EU, and the desirability to exclude the Communists. Tymoshenko criticized Moroz' proposed excisions

KIEV 00002932 002 OF 002

and his early profligacy as Speaker, stressed the need for Ukraine to have a civilized opposition, and continued to support early elections. Yanukovych stressed the themes of unity and the ability of Regions and OU to work together.

16. (SBU) The extended second half of the roundtable featured lengthy exchanges on NATO and related language in the proposed National Unity Pact and the best way to conceptualize national security. Symonenko, and to a softer extent Moroz, attacked the NATO-related language, engaging in an extended debate with both Yushchenko and Bezsmertny. Yushchenko stressed Ukraine's need to properly address the conceptual nature of national security through the European approach of collective security, which was the most dependable and cost effective approach. Yushchenko specifically mentioned Tuzla Island, the focus of a 2004 crisis with Russia; he also mentioned Ukraine's need for massive investment to maintain its defense technology, implying NATO might be able to help as well as reinforcing his greater point about collective security. Bezsmertny said that OU would never back off the point expressing Ukraine's NATO membership aspirations.

Horbulin: The rationale behind Yushchenko's choice  
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17. (C) Prior to the start of the July 27 roundtable, acting National Security and Defense Council Secretary Volodymyr Horbulin shared with Ambassador the rationale underlying Yushchenko's apparent choice to endorse a broad coalition of "national unity" instead of dismissing the Rada and calling new elections. Both options were possible, stressed Horbulin, but Rada dismissal could have completely unpredictable consequences, particularly if Moroz and Regions attempted to provoke a constitutional crisis.

18. (C) The key to securing a broad coalition agreement with Regions, stressed Horbulin, was to ensure a range of conditions were met. Regions clearly staked maximum importance on Yanukovych becoming PM; Yushchenko appeared

more inclined now to agree. Yushchenko's own starting points were the continuation of his foreign and domestic policy agendas; the three "non-negotiable" points were: exclusion of the communists from the coalition; Presidential right to appoint the full "power" personnel, not only the constitutionally mandated Foreign Minister, Defense Minister, Security Service (SBU) chief, and General Prosecutor, but Interior Minister too; and the seating of the Constitutional Court. Resolution of the Constitutional Court disagreement was perhaps the key "necessary condition" for Yushchenko to support Yanukovych's PM candidacy, suggested Horbulin, who is non-partisan.

¶9. (C) The driving rationale behind formation of a coalition of national unity would be to avoid further artificial splits (raskol) in society, said Horbulin. The last two election cycles had unfortunately done much to split Ukraine; it was essential now to heal the divisions and make forward progress achieved in the past two years irreversible. In Horbulin's mind, a broad coalition offered the best chance at this juncture for Ukraine to move forward, both on foreign and domestic policy. Horbulin expressed hope that changes in society and Ukraine's freer media, combined with the authority of Yushchenko as President, meant that Yanukovych would be more constrained as PM in 2006 than he had been from 2002-2004.

What next? Textual haggling, no guaranteed outcome  
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¶10. (C) Note: The exchanges between potential broad coalition partners Regions, OU, and Socialists were not entirely harmonious, with OU's Bezsmertny and Regions' Azarov arguing towards the end, and Bezsmertny accusing Regions of trying to rewrite agreed-upon sections of text. While Regions claimed the pact could be signed in "half an hour," delays in the resumption of the roundtable discussions July 28 indicated that behind-door negotiations continued, with the suggested time for a 12 noon signing time mentioned by Moroz and Yanukovych in separate meetings with DAS Kramer and the Ambassador already passed. Moroz emphasized to DAS Kramer that the document to be signed was a political rather than a legal agreement and particularly important as a public gesture. While the outcome is by no means certain, it is increasingly possible that Ukraine might see its third new coalition line-up in a span of five weeks. However, as Yanukovych put it - at this point, it is all "in God's hands."

¶11. (U) Visit Embassy Kiev's classified website at:  
[www.state.gov.gov/p/eur/kiev](http://www.state.gov.gov/p/eur/kiev).  
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